Fifth Annual Meeting of the National Rice Bio-Technology Network

1578. SHRI TARA CHARAN MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the fifth annual meeting of the National rice bio-technology network was organised in New Delhi in November, 1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof with background;

(c) whether world's top agricultural scientists have been entrusted with the work of reviewing the progress of rice research and suggest ways to improve India's ambitious hybrid rice development programmes; and

(d) if so, the names of such scientists, country-wise with terms and conditions and time fixed for submission of their observations?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) Yes, Sir. The fifth annual meeting of the National Rice Biotechnology Network was held on 13-16 November, 1996 at New Delhi.

(b) The National Rice Biotechnology Network was started in 1989 at the Directorate of Rice Research, Hyderabad. The collaborating institutions include ICAR Institutes; State Agricultural Universities; CSIR institutions; traditional universities and private sector institutions. The network collaborators meet annually to review the progress of work, exchange ideas, share expertise and facilities through developing collaborative programmes on rice biotechnology.

In the fifth annual meeting, about 200 participants took part which were represented by all the networking centres; specialists in the field of molecular biology from USA, UK, Japan and Philippines; representatives of funding agencies and invitees from Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Malawi. Many of the foreign participants were observers and were invitee to the 2nd International Crop Science Congress.

(c) Yes, Sir. The mid-term evaluation of the hybrid rice project has been conducted by a High Level Committee.

(d) The Committee consisted of Dr. James Mc Williams of UNDP, Dr. Hiroshi Ikehashi of FAO and Dr. S.K. Sinha of ICAR.

The Committee has already submitted its recommendations. The Committee has appreciated the remarkable progress made by the project in a very short time and recommended that this project may be used as a model for similar activities in other south East Asian countries.

Subsequently, Dr. S.S. Virmani of International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Philippines has also reviewed the programme in October, 1996. He has appreciated the progress made by the project and has made some suggestions for further improvement of the hybrid rice programme in India.

Training of Women in Agriculture

1579. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some European countries are funding projects for training of women in agriculture in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total number of women covered under the project so far in the country, particularly in Maharashtra; and

(d) the role being played by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) Yes, Sir. Government of Denmark and Government of Netherlands are funding projects for Training of Women in Agriculture in 4 and 2 States respectively.

(b) The details of all these projects are given in the Statement-I (*See* below).

(c) Total number of women covered under each projects is given in Statement-II (*See* below). There is no project presently being implemented in Maharashtra with the assistance from any European Country.

(d) Directorate of Extension, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India is the Nodal Agency responsible for implementation of all these projects.